

WORLD  
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## Sleuths for the Sleuths

HOW DO WE make sure that our intelligence agencies are doing an intelligent job?

By the very nature of the work, intelligence activities are not readily subjected to analysis and review. But the need for maintaining some overall check is conceded. The Cuban fiasco, in which the role of our intelligence agents was sharply criticized, has spurred fresh demands for a new approach.

President Kennedy has already named a special committee, headed by Gen. Maxwell D. Taylor, retired Army chief of staff, to look into the Central Intelligence Agency.

But the CIA, although it is the biggest "secret service" department in government, is only one of about 30 agencies gathering intelligence. The armed forces, the Atomic Energy Commission, and the State Department all maintain intelligence services.

THERE IS strong support in Congress for creation of a congressional "watchdog" committee to oversee the government's intelligence and information programs.

President Kennedy is moving in a somewhat different direction by recruiting new members for a presidential board, set up by former President Eisenhower, to monitor intelligence activities. Dr. James R. Killian Jr., president of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, and the board's first chairman, has been asked by Kennedy to take on the assignment once again.

Dr. Killian has had a varied experience in Washington in numerous consulting roles. This, plus his vast prestige as a scientist, educator, and administrator, will doubtless help persuade the public that the Kennedy

administration is moving quickly to tidy up loose ends in its intelligence operations.

It may be, however, that none of these proposals for watchdogs or monitors, or overseers gets to the real heart of the problem. A need for better coordination may exist, but it is doubtful that this is the most serious question. Weekly coordinating sessions are now attended by the heads of all of the government's top intelligence outfits, including the CIA.

SO THE ISSUE probably doesn't center around finding out what other federal agents are doing; the problem is to define the function and scope of our intelligence services.

Should the agency that is supposed to prepare intelligence reports also be engaged in implementing these reports with operations in the field? The CIA, it is said, performs this kind of dual function. In the Cuban affair, the CIA was not only assessing the situation, it was helping to direct the invasion.

Many persons think this combination of responsibilities was a mistake. The dismal failure of the Cuban invasion lends strong supporting evidence to this belief.

Instead of placing the emphasis on the monitoring of intelligence activities by special boards or committees, the administration can better concentrate on the review of basic policy that the Taylor committee may provoke.

It may be helpful to find out how our agencies are performing. But it will be even more to the point to determine why they are doing what they are, and whether a fundamental change in assignments and responsibilities is indicated.